

2042 Implementation

Frequently Asked Questions about the Subject Matter Standards for the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential

A. THE NEW STANDARDS

A1. Question: With the new standards, are there still two pathways for a multiple subject candidate to demonstrate subject matter competency?

Answer: Yes, completion of a CCTC approved Elementary Subject Matter (ESM) program or passing of the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET): Multiple Subjects Examination will allow a future elementary school teacher to demonstrate subject matter mastery. For more information on the CSET, go to www.cset.nesinc.com

A2. How do the new elementary subject matter standards align with the examination route for obtaining a credential?

Answer: The ESM program standards and the CSET: Multiple Subjects Examination are aligned; both are built on the same content specifications (see Appendix A of the ESM Standards). There is a difference in the content of the examination and the approved program standards in that Health content is specified in the standards, but is not included in the examination. This is the result of restrictions in Education Code Section 44282 which specifies exactly the subjects that can be included in the examination (Health is not included). A different section of the Education Code (Section 44314) governs the areas of study in the approved programs and provides more latitude to include additional subjects. Health was added to the list of subjects in the approved programs since Health is one of the subjects that elementary teachers are required to teach.

Although both routes allow prospective teachers to demonstrate their subject matter competency, only in the subject matter program have future teachers been required to connect that content with teaching practices in the K-8 classroom (Standard 7). Candidates who demonstrate proficiency through the examination route may or may not have similar classroom experiences. Other areas such as technology use, integrated content, and use of exemplary teaching strategies are required in an approved program but are not assessed on the CSET: Multiple Subjects Examination.

A3. Question: Given the variability of preparation routes to certification, how can K-12 institutions be assured that new teachers will have adequate content preparation?

Answer: Common Standard 5 (for all certification programs at an institution) requires that Professional Teacher Preparation (PTP) programs admit only those who meet the appropriate measures of academic achievement and who demonstrate strong potential for success as evidenced by appropriate measures of personal characteristics and prior experiences. For prospective elementary school teachers, either completion of an approved ESM program or passage of the CSET: Multiple Subjects Examination verifies subject matter competency.

The ESM and PTP standards are aligned with K-12 Academic Content Standards for California students in the public schools. Consequently, beginning teachers are being prepared to teach the content that their students are required to learn.

A4. Question: How do the elementary subject matter standards align with the teacher preparation standards?

Answer: The Elementary Subject Matter standards provide future teachers with the foundational content knowledge upon which teacher preparation program standards are built. Among the common themes that run through both sets of standards are: preparation to teach special needs students; the use and application of technology; inclusion of equity and diversity in the content to be learned/taught; modeling of exemplary teaching and assessment practices; and inclusion of instruction on healthy life-styles.

A5. Question: What are the implications of the ESM standards for community colleges?

Answer: Many four year undergraduate degree institutions that have subject matter programs already have articulation agreements with community colleges through which all or part of the lower division courses are taken at the community colleges. Recent state funding for community colleges through the Reading Development and Teacher Preparation program are also bringing together these institutions to articulate early field experiences. Blended Programs likewise encourage inter-institutional collaboration for subject matter and teacher preparation program components, helping to build the relationships necessary for full implementation. ESM Standard 12 specifically addresses this issue. That standard and its required elements include specific expectations that facilitate articulation and transfer. Because approximately 70% of future teachers begin their undergraduate education in community colleges, it is expected that community colleges will increasingly play a substantial role in the lower division content preparation of teachers.

A6. Question: In what way has the role of subject matter faculty and departments shifted in response to these standards?

Answer: The revised standards call for increased collaboration between academic departments in the design and implementation of a cohesive ESM program. The intent is to support the development of a cohesive program, in which courses are articulated and build the comprehensive knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to rigorous academic preparation for elementary school teaching. The preparation of multiple subject teacher candidates is supported in the new standards as an institution-wide responsibility. The summative assessment is another area for involvement of faculty from multiple departments to collaborate. Partnerships with teacher preparation units within the institution may facilitate establishing strong introductory classroom experiences.

B. UNDERSTANDING THE NEW ESM STANDARDS

B1. Question: How are these standards different from the ones we have been using?

Answer: Here are some of the significant changes: elementary subject matter standards are aligned with state student content standards; collaboration is required between and among departments and institutions; programs must carefully select placements for teacher candidates within K-12 schools; required elements define and elaborate on standards; Part II of the Content Specifications (Appendix A) specify the subject-specific skills and abilities and have been added for all content areas except Reading, Language, and Literature, which has such skills in a single section.

The revised ESM standards contain two new standards. One requires provision of sufficient resources to create and implement a program (Standard 11). The other provides for program review and development (Standard 13). Removed from the previous standards was the standard describing characteristics of content (this was folded into the new Standard 1). In addition, there is some additional flexibility for designing depth of study requirements (Standard 3).

B2. Question: Does a program document need to address the standard and/or the specific elements within the standard?

Answer: Both must be addressed in the program documents, although *how* the institution does so will vary. For example, an institution's documents might include a narrative statement giving an overview of how the program addresses the standard, complemented by matrices showing how/where elements are addressed and include syllabi or course descriptions as evidence for having met the standard. Whatever the organizational format, the text must reference the standard and all required elements or address them specifically. Responses that do not address each standard and its required elements will be considered incomplete.

B3. What is the level of evidence required to show that the standard has been met?

Answer: Program documents should provide sufficient information about how the program intends to deliver content consistent with each standard so that a knowledgeable team of professionals can determine whether each standard has been met. The written text may be organized in a variety of ways. Both holistic and element-by-element responses, as well as a combination of these approaches are acceptable. The self-study document will be reviewed by a 2-3 person team of knowledgeable professionals from K-12 and IHEs. To assist institutions in preparing their response, the CCTC is preparing a document that addresses each ESM standard, identifies and explains key words and phrases, and describes the kinds of evidence that a program sponsor might put together to demonstrate how they have met the standard. These will be available in early January, 2002.

B4. *The following questions all address ESM Standard 7: Introductory Classroom Experiences (K-8)*

Question B4.a: Field experiences are required in ESM as well as PTP program standards. Can the same experience be designed to meet both requirements?

Answer: The introductory classroom experiences within ESM Programs are intended to focus on the content knowledge (see ESM Standard 7 for details) rather than on pedagogy (as in the PTP programs). Field experiences could be designed to meet both ESM and PTP program requirements, but care must be taken to avoid contravening the intent or the restrictions in either. For example, ESM Standard 7 calls for introductory classroom experiences as early as possible in the subject matter program. Such a field experience might be structured so as to also meet a Blended Program (Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program) Early Field Experience requirement. On the other hand, a student teaching experience that specifies whole class instruction (PTP Standard 17) cannot be scheduled until the candidate has completed four fifths of the subject matter program, making it less likely to satisfy the ESM and PTP requirements simultaneously.

Question B4.b: What is the faculty's role in selecting introductory classroom experience sites and/or mentoring teachers?

Answer: That is the institution's decision to make. There is no single way to assign responsibility for selecting field experience sites and certificated classroom teachers who will act as field mentors for students. The program leadership should determine when and how the assignments will be made so that the program is cohesive and supports the philosophy and intent of the program. Collaboration with other units on a campus, e.g., the certification programs or other entities (e.g., California Subject Matter Projects) that have strong ties to the K-12 system might be extremely helpful in identifying and facilitating the establishment of strong site partnerships.

Question B4.c: What is the level of scrutiny of field placements?

Answer: For purposes of initial approval of subject matter programs under the newly adopted standards, evidence for the planned and structured selection and implementation of introductory classroom experiences needs to be presented. The review panels will be looking for evidence of the characteristics of placements as described in ESM Standard 7, e.g., linkages to coursework and opportunities for dialog.

Question B4.d: What experiences are expected during introductory classroom experiences?

Answer: See ESM Standard 7 for some suggested experiences (e.g., structured observations, supervised instruction or tutoring of students). A wide variety of experiences could be included in an ESM program, for example, tutoring a child in reading, working with a classroom teacher to conduct environmental science experiments in a local setting, etc. Programs may require all students to have the same experience, or provide a range of options for students within the program.

Question B4.e: How can introductory classroom experiences be organized so as to not overwhelm school districts?

Answer: The size of the ESM program and number of accessible school districts determine how much of a difficulty this might be. If it appears that local districts might be overwhelmed, the program might explore with them what their needs are in various content areas and to set the experiences up so that they provide needed resources to the schools while simultaneously serving as an introduction for future teachers to the schools. Such

interdependence means that the subject matter program is not expecting the schools to provide field experiences gratis but rather as a part of a mutual exchange to meet teaching/learning needs of future teachers and K-8 students. Required Element 7.5 provides the option of developing a regional consortium to facilitate placements and collaboration.

Question B4.f: What are the qualifications required of the individual conducting the supervision?

Answer: The role of faculty (or K-8 teachers) in mentoring students during their experiences is a program decision that will reflect the workloads and credit assignments for fieldwork made by the institution. Here are a few of the possible qualifications for whomever takes on this role: willingness to serve in this role; skills in helping future teachers perceive and make sense of classroom happenings; sufficient time and expertise to help future teachers understand how content is being learned by diverse students; ability to link student K-8 curricula to college course disciplinary content.

B5. Question: To what extent must the standards of Equity/Diversity and Special Needs be present within or permeate throughout the courses and program? **Answer:** All California teachers are likely to have diverse students in their classes. All subject matters have discipline content that differentially affects, impacts, or connects to students from various abilities, backgrounds, interests, and cultures; such content would be appropriate to include in the program. Faculty might also model how to adapt instruction to students in their courses who themselves demonstrate this diversity. The institution must make the case for meeting this standard by providing evidence that demonstrates how the Program students confront issues of equity/diversity and special needs as they build their subject matter expertise. The adequacy is determined by the review team based on the evidence presented. Rather than counting the number of times when issues of equity/diversity or any other cross-program quality (e.g., technology) are included in coursework, the review teams will examine the program as a whole to see if such qualities appear to be substantively visible within the program.

B6. Question: Where the standards refer to specific or "distinct" coursework, does this mean a separate course?

Answer: No. When the standards refer to *coursework*, e.g., as in ESM Standard element 5.8, this does not specify a separate or dedicated course. Rather, coursework should be interpreted as learning experiences that might be found in a single course, but also could be encountered as part of a course, as parts of a number of different courses, and in a variety of ways within one or more courses.

B7. Question: Does an ESM program have to teach explicitly everything that is in the content specifications (Appendix A)?

Answer: It is expected that all content included in the standards and content specifications will be addressed to varying degrees within the program. It would be impossible to teach every specific concept or fact in a deep enough way that future teachers would both know and remember the specific content in every subject matter for all elementary/middle level grades. Rather, programs are being required to provide future teachers with access to the most important foundational knowledge as is contained in the content specifications through

a variety of instructional approaches, including the inquiry processes as given in Part II of the content specifications.

B8. Question: How has the depth of study standard (ESM Standard 3) changed?

Answer: Standard 3 provides for a more restricted set of subject matters/majors that may be included in the development of the concentration (now restricted to the major subject areas of study specified in Standard 2) but has increased the flexibility of courses that can be used to provide this deep knowledge (i.e., the standard no longer restricts the depth of study courses to upper division and non-required courses in the program).

C. THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

C1. Question: What is the implementation timeline for these standards?

Answer: According to the Implementation plan approved by the Commission in September 2001, all approved elementary subject matter programs must transition to the new standards by December 31, 2003. You can find a copy of this plan on the CTC web site:

www.ctc.ca.gov under the *SB 2042 Info* section. Ten institutions have submitted proposals to the Commission for Early Adoption of the Elementary Subject Matter Standards.

Documents for these institutions will be reviewed in April, 2002. The remaining institutions will be asked to submit their preferences for a document review time by January 30, 2002.

Information about the submission process time frames is under development. The CCTC assumes that all currently approved programs are capable of being accredited under the new standards, and is committed to working with program sponsors to this end.

C2. Question: Where will funding for the implementation of these standards, including new coursework as well as increased responsibility for supervision and field work, be found?

Answer: No funds are available from the CCTC for implementing the new standards, except for the Early Adopters who have received Title II funds to support their short term planning process. However, many of the changes incorporated into the new standards are acknowledged to be good practice in teacher preparation at the state and national levels.

Therefore, many California institutions have already initiated changes to their programs, thereby anticipating the SB 2042 changes in program standards. ESM Standard 11 also addresses the appropriate allocation of resources at the institutional level to support ESM programs. Some of the options for supporting implementation of the SB 2042 standards involve looking at current structures and coursework in new ways. On many campuses, students completing elementary subject matter requirements constitute a significant percent of FTES enrollments. Current programs report that the allocated resources for the ESM programs do not reflect the proportion of credit hours generated. Institutions may need to reallocate some resources in order to determine and implement necessary program changes. Some institutions have also sought additional funds for this purpose from a mix of local, state, or national grants from public and private foundations, or gifts.

C3. Question: When submitting a subject matter proposal, must all changes have completed the institutional approval process?

Answer: Yes, but . . . The key here is the time frame required for substantive changes to programs required to meet the new standards. Some parts of an institution's programs will already be compatible with the new standards. Other parts of the programs may require small changes that can be immediately implemented. If there are substantive changes that will require approval of various campus committees and/or inter-institutional agreements, and if the institution does not have sufficient time to complete the approval process before the Institutional Review or Accreditation process, then the institution may need to submit documentation (e.g., letters from senior administrators about the status of the proposed change) that shows the intent and timeline for completing the institutional approval process. When in doubt, check with your assigned regional implementation team consultant, or if you are coming into an accreditation cycle visit, your institution's assigned consultant.